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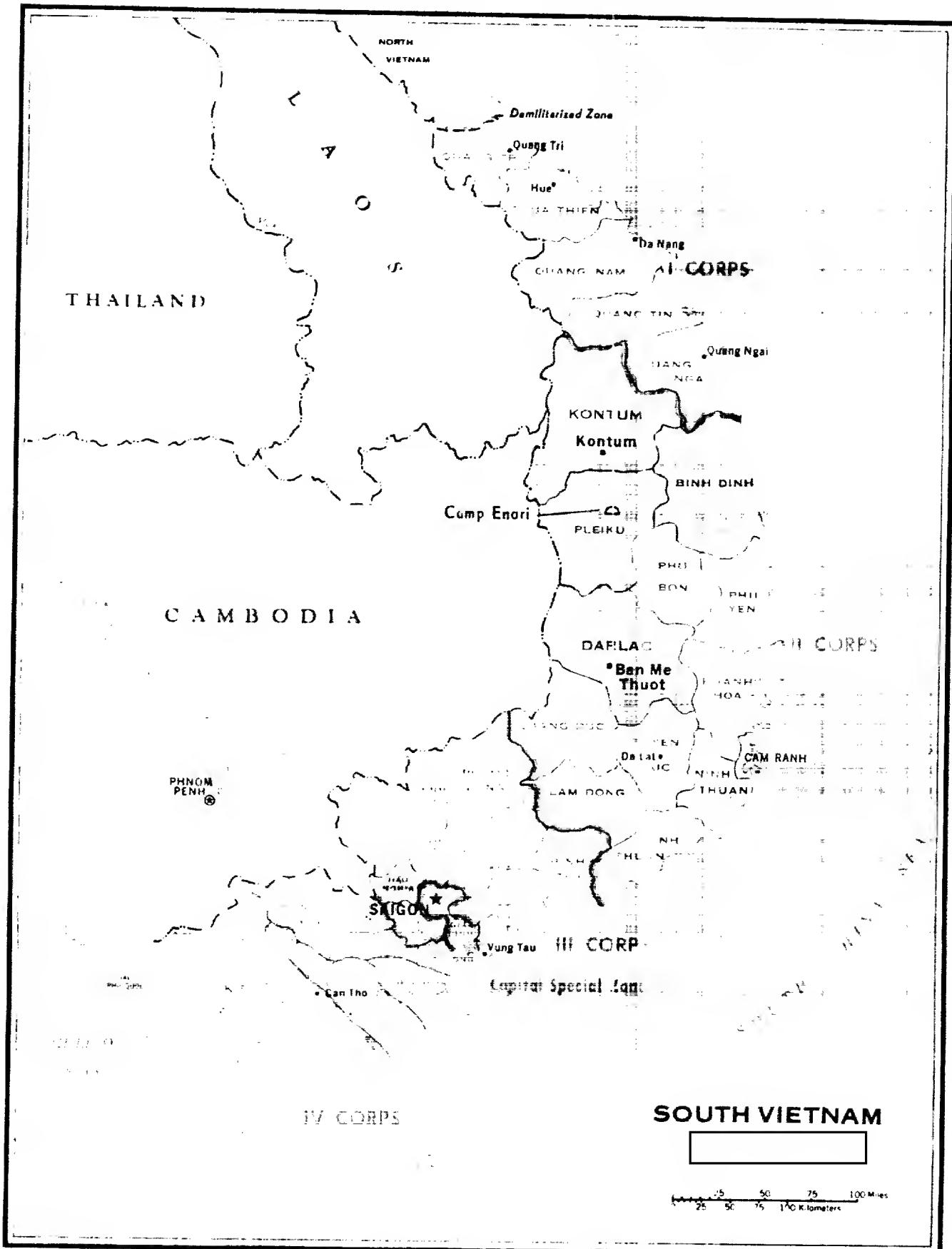
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[South Vietnam: Mortar attacks on allied positions in the central highlands and ground probes of several outposts on 15 May may signal the beginning of major offensive activity in this area.

Captured prisoners have long indicated that the Communists are prepared to coordinate attacks throughout Kontum, Pleiku, and Darlac provinces. One of the ground attacks on the 15th was against a South Vietnamese Regional Force position east of Kontum and involved at least a battalion of Communists. Mortar fire hit the US military advisory compound in Kontum, Camp Enari, headquarters of the US 4th Infantry Division, and the northern outskirts of Ban Me Thuot.

Near Saigon, the Communists continue to fire into population centers. The attacks are particularly heavy in Hau Nghia Province and may represent an effort to cover the withdrawal of main force units from Saigon proper. Allied forces are encountering company-to-battalion size units along Communist exfiltration routes. Engagements have been fought from well-prepared Communist positions, suggesting that enemy units intend to remain close to Saigon.

[three battalions from Binh Dinh Province are poised for a new attack on Saigon in which the Binh Loi Bridge is a specific target. This bridge controls the northeastern access to Saigon.

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According to press reports, South Vietnamese representative in Paris Bui Diem is under instructions to make "discreet contacts" with the North Vietnamese delegation through Vietnamese exiles living in Paris. Diem is reported to have told journalists in Paris that the South Vietnamese are tired of the war and ready to compromise but not surrender.

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[Diem's remarks may have been misinterpreted, but his stated willingness to meet with the North Vietnamese is not out of line with established Saigon policy. Saigon has always said that it was willing to meet with Hanoi, since they were the principal parties in the war.] (Map)]

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Communist China: Efforts to form new "revolutionary committees" continue to be pushed, even in areas where there is considerable violence and disorder.

Sporadic but violent clashes, often between armed groups, reportedly are still occurring in many areas of China. In general, fighting is heaviest in the six provinces that have not yet formed "revolutionary committees." These provinces seem to be hard-core problem areas. Some are run by military men who may not have Peking's complete trust. Recent speeches by Peking leaders, as quoted in Red Guard newspapers, have been critical of commanders in Szechwan, Yunnan, Fukien, and Sinkiang. According to an April newspaper, delegations in Peking representing factions including those in the military have been studying a directive issued by Mao Tse-tung in February telling military units to correct their political errors.

Delegations from the six provinces that still lack committees have been in Peking since at least February. Apparently top leaders are having considerable difficulty agreeing on who will run these provinces.

It appears that disorder is no obstacle to the formation of a new "revolutionary committee." Fighting was very heavy in parts of Liaoning Province just before a committee was established there on 10 May.

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The chairman of the Liaoning committee is the controversial commander of the Shenyang Military Region, Chen Hsi-lien. Chen has been repeatedly denounced by militant Red Guard groups, who presumably instigated the fighting reported on 10 May. The last two provincial committees--Shensi (1 May) and Liaoning--appear to be unusually weak structures. [redacted]

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Czechoslovakia: Government leaders in Prague have reassured Moscow of their "permanent cooperation," but at the same time expressed determination to continue their reforms.

At a press conference on 14 May, Premier Cernik emphasized Czechoslovakia's ties to the Soviet Union and the other "socialist" states. Alluding to outside pressures, he said: "It is polemics, rather than pressure. Perhaps there will be pressure later on, we do not know. There could be, for example, pressures on our oil or on our iron ore. But we are going to go ahead and do what we must do and we will wait and see." As far as is known, Czechoslovak news media have not reported these remarks.

The Soviet press continues to attack Czechoslovak liberals but has yet to criticize any of Prague's new leaders. Moscow's trade union newspaper, Trud, on 15 May protested a Czechoslovak philosopher's having been permitted to deny the leading role of the party in Prague's official trade union paper. It compared his views to those of "our enemies." On the same day the Soviet writers' union daily criticized Czechoslovakia's most famous playwright on essentially the same grounds.

The restricted nature of Moscow's press attacks suggests that the Soviets may be waiting further results of their pressure campaign before making new moves against Czechoslovakia.

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France: Student and labor unrest may lead to an eventual cabinet shuffle but is unlikely to bring down the government.

The government has promised major concessions to the students, including an amnesty for those arrested and the formation of a special committee to deal with student demands. It probably hopes these concessions will take the steam out of student demonstrations and strengthen the government's hand in the censure vote next week. A cabinet change, however, may be necessary in view of student and parliamentary demands for the resignation of the ministers of education and the interior. De Gaulle would want to postpone this so as not to concede too much under pressure.

Meanwhile, the forces arrayed against the government have begun to show signs of division. Some student-teacher elements resent the absence of labor during the first days "at the barricades" and believe the unions are exploiting the unrest for their own ends. The students' unwillingness thus far to give the government a chance to follow through on promised reforms, as well as the Communist and anarchist flavor of recent demonstrations, may reduce public support for the students.

Also evident is a split between moderate elements wanting reform and extremists seeking overthrow of the "bourgeois order." Attempts by the militants to regain the revolutionary momentum of 13 May could bring on a fresh--and harsh--government reaction.



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Japan: The leftist opposition is mounting a nationwide protest campaign to end all port calls by US nuclear-powered warships.

An abnormally high radioactivity reading in Sasebo harbor during the recent visit of the Swordfish was quickly publicized by the opposition. Subsequent widespread exploitation by the press and the opposition reflects the highly sensitive "nuclear allergy" of the Japanese public.

Sato and cabinet members have come under sharp opposition grilling in the Diet and are under considerable pressure to reassure the public on radioactive hazards.

The press reports that a committee sponsored by the Socialist Party will stage three weeks of "anti-Swordfish" rallies and demonstrations, beginning at Sasebo on 18 May. Other demonstrations will follow at Yokosuka and Tokyo, where the national campaign will reach its peak when Socialist Diet members are to take to the streets the first week of June. The "radioactivity scare" gives the Socialists a widely popular issue for the campaign for the House of Councillors election in July.



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British Honduras: The British see no hope of settling their dispute with Guatemala over British Honduras on the basis of the US mediator's proposals.

London is considering sending a ministerial-level delegation to the colony to discuss what should be done next. One of the main topics for discussion would be the British Honduran request for the UK to arrange an independence conference in June. According to Foreign Office officials, such a conference cannot be postponed long.

London will continue to seek a means of resolving the dispute that would permit future cooperation between the two neighboring states. The only settlement it believes British Honduras would consider would involve no more than economic cooperation with Guatemala and access to the Caribbean.

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Chile: Efforts of the Chilean Communist Party to build a "popular front" as its vehicle for attaining power are meeting with early success.

The Communist and Radical parties issued a joint declaration on 13 May calling for unity of action by all progressive forces. After harshly criticizing the "inefficient and undefined" policy of the Christian Democratic government, the parties stated that there are points of agreement permitting joint action toward formation of a multiparty government.

The declaration is a major statement of the Communist interest in creating a broad electoral alliance to bring it into the government in 1970. The declaration implicitly rejects the concept of a narrow Marxist front espoused by the pro-Castro Socialists and probably will accentuate rifts in the Radical and Christian Democratic parties. The declaration also constitutes a rebuff to Christian Democratic leaders and to the idea of a leftist front under presidential aspirant Radomiro Tomic.

Communists held government positions in 1946 when a Radical president, elected with their support, appointed three to important cabinet posts and several others to middle and lower level executive jobs. The Communists, in an apparent effort to push their luck, took too active a role in serious mining strikes. They were thrown out of office in early 1947 and the party was outlawed in 1948. It was made legal again in 1958. It may have learned from this experience, however, and might play a discreet role in any leftist government now.

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Korea: South Korean artillery fire [redacted]

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[redacted] ranged north of the military demarcation line at least three times in late April. Such firings need the permission of either the senior US or Korean commander of the forces along the zone. The South Koreans, however, have never admitted firing on targets on the northern side of the line. [redacted] because the northerners have not responded in kind, senior South Korean commanders are convinced that these artillery attacks are the way to deal with North Korean raiding parties in the Demilitarized Zone.

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South Korea - West Germany: Relations between the two countries continue to be agitated over the case of South Korean members of a North Korean spy ring spirited out of West Germany last spring by South Korean security agents. Bonn and Seoul apparently had an understanding that the group would be shown clemency when trials were completed.

The West Germans have been upset by the Seoul Appellate Court decision increasing the already harsh sentences of some of the group. Bonn is demanding that they be granted clemency before the South Korean Supreme Court reviews their cases. Seoul is interpreting a delay in West German financing of a South Korean thermal power plant as political pressure, and may refuse to work out a new understanding acceptable to Bonn. [redacted]

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Japan-Philippines: Japan is delaying talks on a \$30-million loan promised the Philippines because the city of Manila has closed down Japanese trading firms it claims were established illegally. The city's action contravenes recent steps the Marcos government has taken to encourage Japanese investment. The dispute will probably be resolved and the loan eventually formalized, but the incident is likely to discourage Japanese private investment.

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USSR-Yugoslavia: Three Soviet diesel-powered, R-class attack submarines and two auxiliaries that have been operating in the Mediterranean for over four months arrived in the Yugoslav port of Tivat in early May for minor repairs and crew liberty. Two Soviet submarines made a similar visit to Yugoslavia last June. The visits probably reflect Soviet interest in broadening access to ports in the Mediterranean rather than any significant change in Yugoslav-Soviet military relations.

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Nigeria: Peace talks, now reportedly scheduled for 23 May in Kampala, Uganda, are not likely to lead to an early resolution of basic differences. The generalized agenda contains items on which federal and Biafran representatives meeting in London for the past ten days could not agree. Neither side, moreover, yet seems willing to make meaningful substantive concessions.

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